



NEWSLETTER



Valley County FSA Office

February 2011

**County Executive
Director, Mike
Hagfeldt**

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www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

Valley County Office Program Technicians:

**Stephanie Meier
Roberta Hopstad
Sheri Daggett
Darlene Otten
Britney Cornwell
Karen Bergtoll,
Temporary**

**Sharon Baillargeon,
Farm Loan Manager**

**Jaylein Nickels, Farm
Loan Officer**

**Jodie Moran, Farm
Loan Program
Technician**

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

County Committee Members:

**Mike Wesen, Chair
Richard Fulton, Vice-
Chair
Arden Unrau, Member
Theresa Shipp,
Advisor**

**Next County
Committee Meeting:
Mar 3rd, 2011 8:00 am**

2009 SURE (Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program) Signup Set from Jan. 10 to July 29, 2011

Contact Person: Sheri Daggett

SURE provides financial assistance for crop production and/or quality losses due to a natural disaster. SURE is a total farm revenue disaster program. A "farm" for SURE purposes, is defined as the total of all crop acreages in all counties that is planted or intended to be planted for harvest by the producer.

To be eligible for SURE, a producer must have at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance; a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops; and have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or a contiguous county under a Secretarial Disaster Designation.

Individual producers may be eligible, without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, if the actual production on the SURE farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production, due to a natural disaster.

If you had a 10% production loss (associated with adverse weather) on one crop of economic significance and had crop insurance (CAT/NAP) purchased on all 2009 crops, contact the Valley County FSA office to set up an appointment as soon as possible. Signup for 2009 SURE began January 10, 2011 and **ends on July 29, 2011.**

In order for producers to be eligible for assistance under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) Program and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), producers must obtain a plan of insurance for each insurable and non-insurable commodity on the farm, **excluding grazing**. To be eligible for assistance under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), producers must obtain either coverage under the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage Rainfall Index pilot Program offered through crop insurance, or NAP coverage, or both on their grazing.

CRP General Signup announced for March 14 through April 15, 2011

Contact Person: Britney Cornwell

A general signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will begin on March 14, 2011, and continue through April 15, 2011. During the signup period, farmers and ranchers may offer eligible land for CRP's competitive general signup at their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

Land currently not enrolled in CRP may be offered in this signup provided all eligibility requirements are met.

Additionally, current CRP participants with contracts expiring September 30, 2011 may submit new contract offers.

Contracts awarded under this signup are scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2011.

FSA will evaluate and rank eligible CRP offers using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that assists in calculating the environmental benefits to be gained from the contract. The EBI consists of five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits). Cost factors are also entered into the equation. In addition to the general sign-up, FSA's CRP Continuous Sign-up Program is ongoing. Continuous acres represent the most environmentally desirable and sensitive land. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov or contact your local Farm Service Agency at (406) 228-4321.

Reasonable Accommodations:

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any FSA programs should contact the County Executive Director at the FSA Office or the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock (ELAP)

Contact Person: Britney Cornwell

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock (ELAP) program provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock that have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, including losses due to blizzards and wildfires as determined by the Secretary. ELAP covers losses occurring from January 1, 2011 through October 1, 2011 that **are not** covered under other disaster programs including Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE).

There are two categories of livestock losses covered by ELAP:

- Livestock death losses caused by an eligible adverse weather or loss condition; and
- Livestock feed and grazing losses which include additional costs incurred for providing feed to eligible livestock (i.e. snow removal) and additional costs of purchasing feed, above normal quantities, required to maintain eligible livestock during an eligible adverse weather or loss condition, until additional livestock feed becomes available.

A notice of loss must be reported and filed with FSA the earlier of :

- 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent to the producer; or
- 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss occurred.

For producers to be eligible for ELAP, producers must obtain for **every commodity on every farm in which the producer has an interest for the relevant program year:**

In the case of an "insurable commodity," obtain catastrophic coverage or better under a policy or plan of insurance administered under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (FCIA), excluding grazing.

In the case of a "noninsurable commodity" obtain the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage by filing the required paperwork and paying the administrative state application closing date, excluding grazing.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

Contact Person: Britney Cornwell

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) program provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather that occurs from January 1, 2011 through October 1, 2011 for the 2011 signup. Adverse weather that may apply at this time includes blizzards, extreme cold, and floods.

A notice of loss must be submitted the earlier of :

- 30 calendar days of when the loss of the livestock was apparent to the producer;
- 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss of livestock occurred.

Please contact the Valley County FSA Office if you have had any livestock deaths that could possibly qualify.



FINAL LOAN & LDP AVAILABILITY DATES

Contact Person: Sheri Daggett

The deadline to apply for the 2010 crop year LDP's or loans is March 31, 2011 for Wheat, Barley, Oats, Canola, and Flax.

The deadline for Corn, Mustard, Safflower, Soybeans, Sunflowers, Lentils, Dry Peas, and Chickpeas is May 31, 2011.

Selected Interest Rates - February 2011	
Farm Operating - Direct	2.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Conservation Loan	4.750%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility - 7 year	2.750%
Farm Storage Facility - 10 year	3.375%
Farm Storage Facility - 12 year	3.625%
Commodity Loans	1.250%

Sorghum Checkoff Referendum

USDA will conduct a referendum on the Sorghum Checkoff Program Feb. 1-28, 2011, at local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Ballots may be obtained in person, by mail or facsimile at county FSA offices, or via the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/sorghumpage. For the program to continue, the Sorghum Promotion, Research, and Information Order requires that a referendum be conducted no later than 3 years after the start of assessments, which began on July 1, 2008. The order requires a simple majority vote in the referendum for the program to continue. Any eligible person engaged in the production and sale of sorghum or the importation of sorghum from July 1, 2008, to December 31, 2010, is eligible to participate. Individuals are required to provide documentation such as a sales receipt or remittance form that shows they engaged in the production and sale of sorghum or the importation of sorghum. The Sorghum Checkoff Program is funded at the rate of 0.6 percent of the net market value on grain sorghum and 0.35 percent of the net market value of sorghum forage. It's a national, coordinated, self-help marketing program designed to strengthen the position of sorghum in the market place, maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for sorghum, and develop new markets and uses for sorghum.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage Deadline for 2011 Crop Year is March 15th

Contact Person: Roberta Hopstad

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to provide financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields or prevented planting occurs as the result of natural disasters. Statutes limit NAP coverage to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity (except livestock), for which the catastrophic (CAT) level of insurance is not available.

The application and sales closing deadline for 2011 NAP coverage is **March 15, 2011**.

Producers who choose to obtain NAP coverage for 2011 must file a CCC-471 application for coverage and pay the applicable service fee by the sales closing deadline. Eligible producers must pay a service fee of \$250 per crop per administrative county or \$750 per producer per county, not to exceed \$1875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Service fees may be waived for limited-resource producers.

For the 2011 crop year it is imperative that producers purchase either NAP or a catastrophic (CAT) level of crop insurance for all insurable and non-insurable crops. This is not only for production coverage, but also for eligibility for the new permanent disaster programs created in the 2008 Farm Bill.

1099-G is in the Mail

Producers who have received payments from FSA are also receiving a CCC-1099-G in the mail. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service regarding FSA payments made to producers during the previous calendar year. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income.

When the CCC-1099-G is received, it should be checked with your records to see that the amounts are correct. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS. If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact your local FSA office for assistance locating the correct payment data.

ATTENTION: Refunds are no longer reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with an eAuthentication user ID and password may access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

Customer Statement- Producers who have signed up for a USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account will be able to access their farm data via their Customer Statement.

The Customer Statement puts a range of USDA services and programs into a single report that's at your fingertips and available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It allows USDA customers to view their participation, application and payment status in various commodity and conservation programs; information on farm loans; and conservation plan and land unit information.

Note: Website use requires level 2 e-Authentication access. Follow the steps below to obtain level 2 access...

1. Go to www.eauth.egov.usda.gov, complete a customer profile and submit it online
2. After submitting your customer profile, you will receive a confirmation email, and you must respond to it within 7 days to activate your account
3. Then you must complete the "Identity Proofing" process by visiting a local USDA Service Center and presenting a photo ID, such as your driver's license

VALLEY COUNTY FSA OFFICE
54062 HWY 2 W, SUITE 1
GLASGOW, MT 59230-2846



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2011 DCP Signup *Contact Person: Darlene Otten*

Enrollment for the 2011 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) has begun and will continue through June 1, 2011. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) urges producers to make use of the eDCP automated website to sign up, or producers can visit the FSA office to complete their 2011 DCP contract. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. FSA will issue advance direct payments beginning Dec. 1, 2010.

The ACRE Option

The Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. The June 1, 2011, deadline is mandatory for all ACRE and DCP participants. FSA will not accept late-filed applications. An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. In exchange for participating in ACRE, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent. The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year.

Farming Operation Changes

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have added or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office ***as soon as possible***. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility. Producers are reminded to contact the office of any changes in your operation so that records can be kept current and accurate.

Agricultural Lending Opportunities

Questions regarding obtaining credit to start or enlarge a farming or ranching operation; financing agricultural operating expenses; or livestock, machinery purchases call your local FSA Office.

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